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WHOLE NO. 591

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SOME REMARKS ON CICERO AS A STUDENT¹

M. Tullius Cicero was born near the Volsian town of Arpinum, in the southeastern part of Latium, on January 3, 106 B. C. Plutarch states (Cicero 1) that Cicero's mother came of a noble family and possessed an excellent character. "Cicero himself makes no *<definite>* allusion whatever to his mother in all his numerous works"².

Of his father, however, and of his birthplace, Cicero speaks in detail, in an interesting passage of the *De Legibus* (2.3), a work brought to completion in 46 or thereabouts. When, therefore, Cicero was sixty years or so of age, that is, when he was already a *senex*, in the stricter sense of the term, he still dwelt with affection on father and on fatherland. Cicero and Atticus are conversing, at Cicero's ancestral home:

'As for myself, when I am privileged to stay away from Rome for a few days together, especially at this season of the year, I hurry to this spot, so lovely, so healthful.... The place appeals to me on another ground as well, for a reason which does not come so close home to you.—'What do you mean? What reason have you in mind?'—The fact that...this is the native district of my brother and myself, the place where we were born. We are scions of an ancient stock that has its roots here. Here our family belongs; here are its *sacra*; here are many evidences of the presence of our forebears. Yonder I see our country-house, in its present form the result of rebuilding and enlarging, thanks to my father's energy. Since his health was poor, he spent almost all his days here in devotion to letters *<in litteris>*. In this very spot, while my grandsire was yet alive³, and the country-house *<the villa>* was, in the good old-fashioned way, yet small, I was born. As a result, there is in my soul, in my heart of hearts, a latent something which makes this place have for me a greater charm, a deeper delight. So, we read, that wisest of wise men rejected immortality that he might be privileged to see Ithaca again⁴.

Cicero's father was of equestrian rank. None of the family, however, had held office at Rome. Hence, when Cicero sought to carve a place for himself at Rome, he labored under the very substantial handicap of being, technically, not *nobilis*, but a mere *novus homo*.

Since the father of Horace, though that father was but a *libertus*, brought his son to Rome, there to be trained in those accomplishments in which every

senator and every knight caused his son to be trained, we need not be surprised that Cicero's father brought him to Rome, that the boy might have better training than was procurable in his native town. Evidently the father, countryman though he was, and though he had never risen above equestrian status, had his connections at Rome, for the great orator L. Licinius Crassus interested himself in Cicero and in his brother Quintus, and two of the best lawyers of the day, the Scaevolas, gave the boys access to their persons.

Of the Scaevolas Cicero speaks in *Laelius De Amicitia* 1:

'When I had put on the *toga virilis*, my father took me to Scaevola <the augur>. His purpose was that, so far as was possible for me and so far as Scaevola would allow, I should never leave the old man's side. In furthering this plan, I made it a point to commit to memory many of Scaevola's learned opinions, many of his pithy and apposite sayings, and I strove in every way to become, through his practical wisdom *<prudentia>*, better trained myself. On his death, I attached myself to Scaevola, the pontifex, who was, I venture to say, the outstanding man of his time in integrity and in ability'.

In *De Oratore* 2.1, Cicero reminds his brother Quintus that, when they were boys, it was a common saying that L. Licinius Crassus the orator had but little learning, and that Antonius the orator had none at all. Many, he continues, did not really believe such statements, even when they made them, but they made them that they might deter Cicero and his brother, *incensos studio discendi, a doctrina*. If, ran the argument, men who were not really *eruditii* have attained *summa prudentia* and *incredibilis eloquentia*, you two boys are wasting your time, and the zeal which your father, an estimable and intelligent gentleman, is bestowing upon your training is foolishness⁵. In the next section, Cicero speaks of being often (it would seem) at Crassus's house, and of remarking, boy though he was, that Crassus talked Greek as if he had never known any other language, and that, in his discussions with Cicero's teachers, Crassus seemed to be thoroughly at home no matter what theme or question was mooted.

There is a charming passage in Plutarch (Cicero 2) which a lover of Cicero would like to accept at its face value (I use Professor Perrin's translation, in the Loeb Classical Library):

...when he was of an age for taking lessons, his natural talent shone out clear and he won name and fame among the boys, so that their fathers used to visit the schools in order to see Cicero with their own eyes and observe the quickness and intelligence in his studies for which he was extolled, though the ruder ones among them were angry at their sons when they

¹What is here presented is part of a paper read at Knoxville, Tennessee, in April, 1926, at the annual meeting of the Southern Branch of The Classical Association of the Middle West and South.

I need not say that the presentation is in no sense exhaustive. I have merely put together a selection from the passages that have appealed to me in my reading. Further, I have deliberately restricted myself to passages in Cicero's own writings. If the paper has no other result than to call the attention of teachers of the Classics to Cicero, Brutus 304-320, a passage which far too many such teachers seem never to have read, the publication of the paper will be well worth while.

²Forsyth, Life of Cicero, 1.15.

³In *De Oratore* 2.265 Cicero makes concerning his grandfather the very interesting statement that he was wont to declare *nostros homines similes esse Syrorum venatum: ut quisque optime Graece sciret, ita esse nequissimum*.

⁴Compare here Cicero, *Pro Archia, passim*, but especially Chapter 7.

saw them walking with Cicero placed in their midst as a mark of honour....

Of Cicero's studies prior to his assumption of the *toga virilis* we have nowhere, so far as I know, any very definite picture. But in that priceless work, the Brutus De Claris Oratoribus, that splendid verbal moving-picture show of the orators of Rome, a picture by Rome's greatest orator and by the greatest master of the Latin language, we have, from Cicero himself, an account of the ways in which, from 90-74 B. C., a period of sixteen years (the seventeenth to the thirty-second of his life), he prepared himself for the place he came, at last, to occupy in Roman rhetoric, Roman oratory, Roman literature. I have in mind §§ 303-320 of the Brutus. I give a free translation.

'It was, then, when Hortensius was in his prime, Cotta had been exiled, and the courts had been interrupted by the Social War, that I came into the forum <90 B. C.>. The leading members of the Bar—Hortensius, Sulpicius, Antonius—were away from the City, serving in the War. The only court sitting at the time was that held in accordance with the provisions of the Lex Varia. I was in constant attendance upon its sessions. The men that pleaded there were orators, beyond question, and they brought into play all their powers, but they were not men of the first rank.... The other men of high rank as speakers were holding civil offices at the time; I heard them almost every day as they addressed the people. This listening to speeches day after day filled me with the keenest enthusiasm.... Every day I wrote, I read, I declaimed. These things, however, did not satisfy me.... I became deeply interested in our country's laws and so I attached myself to Q. Scaevola. He never professed to play the rôle of teacher, yet by the answers he gave to persons who consulted him he did much for the training of those who were keen to listen on such occasions. The next year <88> I learned all that was to be learned about P. Sulpicius's way of addressing the people in a *contio*, by listening to him as he spoke daily (he was tribune of the people). At the same time, Philo, the head of the Academy, came to Rome.... I surrendered myself unreservedly and utterly to him, *admirabili quodam ad philosophiam studio concitatus*. I devoted myself with all the more energy to philosophy, because, though the variety and the importance of the themes with which the law has to do still filled me with delight, still kept me devoted to the law, yet the holding of trials seemed likely to be put off indefinitely. In the same year I worked, at Rome, with Apollonius Molo, of Rhodes, *actor summus causarum et magister*, a man who was at once himself a consummate pleader and a fine teacher of others⁴.

You may think all this, Brutus, foreign to the purpose I set before myself, that of explaining my oratorical career. I bring these matters forward, however, because you wished to trace my course—Atticus is perfectly familiar with the facts—, and because you wanted to see how I followed the trail of Hortensius through the race-course.

For the next three years <86-84> I was engaged, day and night alike, in *omnium doctrinæ meditatione*.... I worked with Diodotus the Stoic. After living for many years in my house, on terms of close intimacy with me, he died, lately, at my house. He trained me especially in logic, a subject of the highest importance to the orator. He was my teacher in many other subjects, too, to which I gave myself up with such ardor that *ab oratoriis exercitationibus nullus dies vacans esset*. I practiced declamation too—to use the current term, with some one or other, every day. I did this in part in Latin, but more often in Greek,

partly because Greek style, which admits of richer ornamentation than Latin naturally allows, encouraged a like mode of speaking in Latin, in part because I could not get the benefit of correction and training by Greek teachers unless I spoke Greek....

At last⁵ I began to plead, in civil and criminal cases both, not that, as so many did in those days, I might learn, in the actual work of a lawyer, how to be lawyer and speaker, but that, since I had been trained to the uttermost limit of my capacities and opportunities, I might formally begin my public career. At the same time I worked with Molo; he had come to Rome to negotiate rewards for the Rhodians <for their loyalty and their suffering in the Mithridatic War>. In my first criminal case, that Pro Sex. Roscio Amerino, I won such approbation that I was accounted equal to the pleading of any case. After that I was engaged in many cases, on all of which I worked with the greatest care, burning, so to say, the midnight oil....

At that time I was very slender, and physically far from strong, with a long, scraggy neck. Such a physical make-up is regarded with suspicion, especially if one who has it works hard and strains his lungs. My friends were, therefore, worried about me, the more so because, in those days, I used to plead a case from beginning to end without the slightest let-up, straining to the utmost my voice and in fact my whole body. My friends and the doctors kept urging me to give up pleading in the courts, but I refused. I thought that I ought to face any risk rather than forego the chance of winning the distinction on which I had set my heart. But, when it dawned on me that by easing the tension on my voice, by controlling it properly, and by changing my style of delivery, I might accomplish two things at once, have proper regard for my health, and learn to speak with juster use of my powers, I went to Asia, with a view to effecting a change in my style of speaking. And so, after having pleaded cases for two years, and having won some reputation in the courts, I left Rome.

On reaching Athens, I spent six months with Antiochus, a distinguished and learned adherent of the Old Academy. My enthusiasm for philosophy, the study of which I had carried on uninterruptedly, with ever-increasing zeal, from my earliest years, was born anew, thanks to this consummate writer and teacher. At the same time I worked with Demetrius Syrus, a long-established and excellent teacher of rhetoric and oratory. Presently, I travelled through the length and breadth of Asia, and I was on intimate terms with the most distinguished orators, practising with them with their full and free consent.... Not content with working with the best *rhetores* of Asia, I went to Rhodes, and devoted myself again to Molo, whom I had heard at Rome. He was not only a pleader of distinction in actual cases, but without a peer in detecting and criticizing the defects in other speakers, and a most skilful teacher. He bent all his energies to checking, if it should prove at all possible, my exuberance, my tendency to overdo things, and toward toning down the youthful licenses I had permitted myself.

As the result of all these things, I came back to Rome, after two years, not merely a better trained man, but virtually a new man, a different man. My tendency to overstrain my voice had disappeared, my oratorical style had, if I may use the expression, ceased to boil over, my lungs had gained strength, and my whole physique was fairly sound.

There were at that time two outstanding orators at Rome, Hortensius and Cotta, who seemed to me models worthy of imitation.... For a year I was engaged in cases of importance. Then I went to Sicily as *questor*. On my return from Sicily, I felt that whatever abilities I possessed at all had been developed to the utmost, and had, so to say, reached their full growth. You may think that the story of my

⁴Several editors have rejected this sentence as a gloss.

⁵This was in 81 B. C., when Cicero was twenty-five years old.

training and of my career has been too detailed, especially since I myself have been telling that story. But my purpose has been not to help you see my ability and my eloquence, but rather to help you to understand *labor et industria <mea>* . . .'

In 70 B. C. came the prosecution of Verres, with its important consequence of making Cicero rather than Hortensius the leader of the Roman Bar. In Brutus § 322 Cicero draws a contrast between himself and the other orators of the day, as follows.

'No one of them was felt to have devoted himself more earnestly or deeply than the common run of men do to literature <litteris>, the fountain source of *perfecta eloquentia*; no one had embraced philosophy, the mother of every good deed, every good word; no one knew the *ius civile*, a matter of prime importance in the pleading of private cases, since the orator must have a knowledge of the law; no one knew the history of Rome, out of which the man who knows it may summon, at his need, a host of glorious witnesses from the world beyond; . . . no one had the ability to step aside a little from a case, in order to delight his hearers; no one had the power to rouse a juryman to wrath or to stir him to tears; no one had that power of the supreme orator, to sway the emotions of his hearers as the demands and exigencies of a case require'.

Can we name a man out of all the ages from Cicero's days to ours who trained himself more faithfully, more exhaustively and more exhaustingly for the career he sought to achieve?

With the year 68 begins the invaluable series of letters written by Cicero to Atticus and to other friends. Between 77 and 68 he had had, by comparison with the experiences of earlier years, especially those two *anni mirabiles*, 80-78, little leisure for systematic study. The letters to Atticus, however, give ample testimony to the abiding strength of Cicero's passion for literary pursuits. In Ad Atticum 1.10, and 1.11, written in 67, Cicero entreats Atticus to let him have a library he has for sale.

'Be sure you do not promise your library to any one, however ardent a suitor you may find for it. I am saving up all my little gleanings, to buy it as a prop for my old age. . . .'

'Please send as soon as possible what you have purchased for my academy. It is astonishing how the mere thought of the place raises my spirits even when I am not in it. Be sure you do not get rid of your books. Keep them for me as you promise. My enthusiasm for them increases with my disgust for everything else. . . .'

At the same time he expresses his loathing for public life, his love of books, to which he looks as the support of his old age. As Professor J. S. Reid says, in his edition (editio maior) of Cicero, *Academica, Introduction*, 5-6 (London, Macmillan and Co., 1885).

. . . In the midst of his busiest political occupations, when he was working his hardest for the consulship, his heart was given to the adornment of his Tusculan villa in a way suited to his literary and philosophical tastes. This may be taken as a specimen of his spirit throughout his life. He was before all things a man of letters; compared with literature, politics and oratory held quite a secondary place in his affections. Public business employed his intellect, but never his heart.

In the year 62 Cicero was released from the consulship and from public life, and was free again to indulge to the full his literary tastes. In 60, writing to Atticus (1.20.7), he says (I use E. O. Winstedt's translation, in The Loeb Classical Library):

. . . L. Papirius Paetus, my good friend and admirer, has offered me the books left him by Ser. Claudius. . . . Now, as you love me, as you know I love you, stir up all your friends, clients, guests, freedmen, nay even your slaves, to see that not a leaf is lost. For I have urgent necessity for the Greek works which, I suspect, and the Latin works which, I am sure, he has left. Every day I seek my recreation, in such time as is left me from my legal labours, more and more in such studies. You will do me the greatest of favours, if you will show the same zeal in this as you generally do in matters about which you think I am really keen. . . .

During the years 62-60 Cicero brought out an edition of some of his speeches, and wrote (in Greek and in Latin) a history of his consulship, as well as a poem on his consulship. In addition, he devoted much time to study, in his villas at Tusculum, Formiae, Antium, and elsewhere. Says Professor Reid (6),

. . . I dwell with greater emphasis on these facts, because of the idea now spread abroad that Cicero was a mere dabbler in literature, and that his works were extempore paraphrases of Greek books <but> half understood. In truth, his appetite for every kind of literature was insatiable, and his attainments in each department considerable. He was certainly the most learned Roman of his age, with the single exception of Varro. . . .

A very instructive passage is De Natura Deorum 1.6. There Cicero writes as follows:

'I see that there has been a good deal of talk about the many works which, within a short period, I have published. Some have wondered whence I derived, or acquired, of a sudden, this passion for 'philosophizing'. Others have wanted to know what I could say, with any approach to certitude, on this or that theme of philosophy. . . . As a matter of fact, there has been no suddenness at all about my 'philosophizing'. From my earliest years I have always devoted to that subject no small measure of pains and care. Indeed, when the world least suspected that I was devoting myself to philosophy, I was working on that subject with the utmost energy. This statement of mine is attested by my speeches, *refertae philosophorum sententias*, by the intimacies I have maintained with men of learning, and by the list of my teachers, the men that trained me—Diodotus, Philo, Antiochus, Posidonius'.

The years 58 and 57 were full of care and sorrow for Cicero, and left him neither the time nor the spirit for study or for writing. But in a letter written to Atticus in May, 55 (Ad Atticum 4.11.2) he says:

'I am devouring literature here with that extraordinary person—for upon my soul I really think he is extraordinary—Dionysius, who sends his respects to you and all your family.'

We may cite here a remark by Mr. J. L. Strachan-Davidson⁷:

. . . Throughout his life Cicero was an omnivorous reader. His theory was that a man who wished to excel in oratory could not study too much nor make his culture too wide; and we gather from his descrip-

⁷Cicero and the Fall of the Roman Republic, 10 (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901).

tions *<De Oratore 2.1>* that he and the group of cousins to which he belonged were trained from the first on this system⁸.

In *Ad Familiares 1.9*, a letter addressed to P. Lentulus Spinther, there is a passage of interest to us (the letter is dated in October, 54. I use the translation by E. S. Schuckburgh):

As to your request that I send you any books I have written since your departure, there are some speeches, which I will give to Menocritus, not so very many, so don't be afraid! I have also written—for I am now withdrawing from oratory and returning to the gentler Muses, which now give me greater delight than any others, as they have done since my earliest youth—well, then, I have written in the Aristotelian style, at least that was my aim, three books in the form of a discussion in dialogue "On the Orator", which, I think, will be of some service to your Lentulus. For they differ a good deal from the current maxims, and embrace a discussion on the whole oratorical theory of the ancients, both that of Aristotle and Isocrates. I have also written three books in verse "On my own Times", which I should have sent you some time ago, if I had thought that they ought to be published....

In the same month, writing to Atticus (4.18.2), Cicero says:

It does not give me a pang that one man absorbs all power. The men to burst with envy are those who were indignant at my having had some power. There are many things which console me, without my departing an inch from my regular position, and I am returning to the life best suited to my natural disposition,—to letters and the studies that I love....

In the same year he was engaged upon his *De Re Publica* (see *Ad Quintum Fratrem 2.12.1*).

In 52 came the *De Legibus*, a work professedly based on Plato and the older philosophers of the Socratic school.

In 51 and 50 Cicero was governor of Cilicia, a province which was then in a sadly distracted state. He stopped at Athens both on his way out from Rome to Cilicia and on his way back home. On his way from Athens to Cilicia he made the acquaintance of Cratipus, the head of the Peripatetic School.

On his return to Italy in 49 Cicero found public affairs there in a very critical condition. In a letter to Atticus, written at Formiae, on March 12, 49, Cicero says (*Ad Atticum 9.4.1-3*. I use again Winstedt's translation).

Though now I rest only so long as I am writing to you or am reading your letters, still I am in want of subject-matter, and feel sure that you are in the same position, for the present crisis debars us from the free and easy topics of friendly correspondence, and the topics connected with the present crisis we have already exhausted. However, not to succumb entirely to low spirits, I have taken for myself certain theses *<θέσεις>*, so to speak, which deal with *la haute politique* *<quae...politikal sunt>* and are applicable to the present crisis, so that I may keep myself from querulous thoughts and practice the subject. Here are some:

Whether one should remain in one's country, even under a tyranny. Whether any means are lawful to abolish a tyranny, even if they endanger the existence of the State. Whether one ought to take care that one who tries to abolish it may not rise too high him-

self. Whether one ought to assist one's country when under a tyranny, by seizing opportunities and by argument rather than by war. Whether one is doing one's duty to the State, if one retires to some place and there remains inactive, when there is a tyranny; or whether one ought to run every risk for liberty. Whether one ought to invade the country and besiege one's native town, when it is under a tyranny. Whether one ought to enroll oneself in the ranks of the loyalists, even if one does not approve of war as a means of abolishing tyranny. Whether one ought in political matters to share the dangers of one's benefactors and friends, even if one does not believe their general policy to be wise. Whether one who has done good service for his country, and by it has won ill-treatment and envy, should voluntarily put himself into danger, for that country, or may at length take thought for himself and his dear ones and avoid struggles against the powers that be.

By employing myself with such questions and discussing the pros and cons in Greek and Latin, I divert my thoughts a little from my troubles and at the same time consider a subject which is very pertinent....

On this passage Professor Reid writes (8):

... It is curious to find Cicero, in the very midst of civil war, poring over the books of Demetrius the Magnesian concerning concord; or employing his days in arguing with himself *<in Greek as well as in Latin>* a string of abstract philosophical propositions about tyranny. Nothing could more clearly show that he was really a man of books; by nothing but accident a politician. In these evil days however, no occupation was long to his taste; books, letters, study, all in their turn became unpleasant.

In 48 and 47 Cicero followed the fortunes of Pompey, but he made his peace with Caesar in 46. In a letter written to Varro some time afterwards (*Ad Familiares 9.12*), he says: 'I would have you know that I am on good terms once again *<redisce in gratiam>* with my age-long friends, my books'. In 45, the *Partititiones Oratoriae*, *Paradoxa*, *Orator*, *Laudatio Catonis*, *Academica*, and *De Finibus* were written or published. To the year 44 belong the *Tusculanae Disputationes*, *De Rerum Natura*, *Cato Maior*, *De Officiis*, and the *De Divinatione*.

To the tremendous literary activity which marked the years 45 and 44 two causes contributed, first, the complete triumph of Caesar, which cut Cicero off from the chance of any further political career, and, indeed, made even the highest oratory impossible for him, and, secondly, the disruption of his life by the death of his beloved Tulliola, which occurred in February, 45.

To these causes Cicero alludes himself in *De Natura Deorum 1.7-9*.

'If any man asks what has driven me to commit to writing my present themes so late in my life, I can easily make him fitting answer. For, since I was becoming enfeebled by lack of occupation *<otio languoremus>*, and the condition of public affairs was such that the State must be managed by a single man, I felt that, out of regard for the State itself, if for no other reason, I ought to unfold philosophy for my fellowcountrymen. I felt that it was a matter of the utmost importance to the glory of our State that matters of such importance as those with which philosophy deals should be contained in our own literature. I do not in the least regret that I formed such a plan and carried it out, for I see plainly that my example has

⁸The *De Oratore* in its entirety is of the first importance to the student of Cicero's intellectual development.

spurred many another not merely to seek to learn these subjects, but also to set them forth in writing. Many men who had been trained in Greek philosophical thought had been utterly unable to share their knowledge with their fellowcountrymen, because they could not bring themselves to believe that what they had learned at the feet of the Greeks could be set forth properly in Latin. As for myself, I feel sure that in philosophical writing I have not been surpassed by the Greeks themselves in mastery of expression *copia*. I was driven to philosophical writing also by the sorrow that seared my soul, as the result of the outrageous blow Fortune dealt me. Had I been able to find any way more effective than philosophy of relieving that sorrow, I should have followed that way by preference. But no other way could I find. And so I gave myself up to the study of philosophy, to the writing of philosophy in its every phase.

Beside this passage and *De Natura Deorum*, quoted above, should be set *De Finibus 1.1-12*.

'I was not unaware, my dear Brutus', says Cicero, § 1, 'that my attempt to set forth in Latin the philosophical speculations of the Greeks would expose me to criticism of divers sorts. Nam quibusdam et eis quidem non admodum indoctis totum hoc displicet, philosophari. Others again find no such fault with such study, si remissius agatur, but feel that it is not right to devote so much interest and labor to this subject. Postremo aliquos futuros suspicor qui me ad alias litteras vocent, genus hoc scribendi, etsi sit elegans, personae tamen et dignitatis esse negent.

To these various classes of critics Cicero makes answer in the following sections. To those who would have him use his pen for subjects other than those of philosophy he replies in § 11; he bids them note that the themes of philosophy are second to none in interest and importance; what can be better worth while, he asks than to set forth the *fines bonorum et malorum?* qua de re cum sit inter dictissimos summa dissensio, quis alienum putet eius esse dignitatis quam mihi quisque tribuat quid in omni munere vitae optimum et verissimum sit exquirere?

Near the beginning of this paper I cited a passage from Cicero, *De Legibus*. There is another important passage in that work which ought to be well and intimately known to every student of things Latin—especially of course to students and teachers of Roman rhetoric (oratory) and Roman history. Much that has been written about historical writing among the Romans would never have been written at all had this passage been really known as it deserves to be known. I have in mind *De Legibus 1.5-9* (the speakers are Atticus and Cicero).

ATT. Teneo quam optabam occasionem neque omittam. Cic. Quam tandem, Tite? ATT. Postulatur a te iam diu vel flagitatur potius historia. Sic enim putant, te illam tractante effici posse ut in hoc etiam genere Graeciae nihil cedamus. Atque ut audias quid ego ipse sentiam, non solum mihi videris eorum studiis, qui litteris delectantur, sed etiam patriae debere hoc munus, ut ea, quae salva per te est, per te eundem sit ornata. Abest enim historia litteris nostris, ut et ipse intellego et ex te persaepe audio. Potes autem tu profecto satis facere in ea, quippe cum sit opus, ut tibi quidem videri solet, unum hoc oratorium maxime. Quam ob rem adgredere, quaesumus, et sume ad hanc rem tempus, quae est a nostris hominibus adhuc ignorata

aut relicta. Nam post annales pontificum maximorum, quibus nihil potest esse ieunius, si aut ad Fabium aut ad eum, qui tibi semper in ore est, Catonem, aut ad Pisoneum aut ad Fannium aut ad Vennonium venias, quamquam ex his aliis plus habet virium, tamen quid tam exile quam isti omnes?....

In the next sentences (§§ 6-7) Atticus elaborates the thought that nothing really worth while has been accomplished by Romans in the writing of history. He concludes with the following appeal to Cicero: *Qua re tuum est munus hoc <the writing of history>, a te exspectatur, nisi quid Quinto videtur secus <Quintus is Cicero's brother>.*

Sections 8-9 run as follows:

QUINTUS. Mihi vero nihil, et saepe de isto collocutum sumus. Sed est quaedam inter nos parva dissensio. ATT. Quae tandem? Q. A quibus temporibus scribendi capiatur exordium. Ego enim ab ultimis censeo, quoniam illa sic scripta sunt ut ne legantur quidem, ipse autem aequalem aetatis suae memoriam depositit, ut ea complectatur quibus ipse interfuit. ATT. Ego vero huic potius adsentior. Sunt enim maximae res in hac memoria atque aetate nostra: tum autem horum amicissimi, Cn. Pompeii, laudes inlustrabit, incurrit etiam in illum memorabilem annum suum, quae ab isto malo praedicari quam, ut aiunt, de Remo et Romulo. M. Intellego equidem a me istum laborem iam diu postulari, Attice. Quem non recusarem, si mihi ullum tribueretur vacuum tempus et liberum. Neque enim occupata opera neque impedito animo res tanta suscipi potest. Utrumque opus est, et cura vacare et negotio. ATT. Quid? Ad cetera, quae scripsisti plura quam quisquam e nostris, quod tibi tandem tempus vacuum fuit concessum? M. Subsiciva quaedam tempora incurront, quae ego perire non patior, ut, si qui dies ad rusticandum dati sint, ad eorum numerum accommodentur quae scribimus. Historia vero nec institui potest nisi praeparato otio nec exiguo tempore absolvi, et ego animi pendere solo, cum semel quid orsus sum, si traducor alio, neque tam facile interrupto contexo quam absolvo instituta.

CHARLES KNAPP

Hellenistic Civilization. By W. W. Tarn. London: Edward Arnold and Company (1927). Pp. viii + 312.

Students of the history of the Hellenistic world have long been handicapped by the lack of authoritative books in English. Until the present moment the only work available has been that of Professor William Scott Ferguson¹, clear and attractive, but still a sketch rather than a full-length history. Mr. Tarn's book, *Hellenistic Civilization*, is the first portion of what seems almost to be a concerted effort on the part of historians to fill a long-felt need. Besides the book under review, there is now on the verge of publication the portion of *The Cambridge Ancient History* scheduled to deal with the Hellenistic world, and Professor Rostovtzeff has announced a forthcoming economic history of the same period. Inasmuch as Mr. Tarn's

¹Greek Imperialism (Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913).

special interest is in political history, Professor Ferguson's in constitutional history, and that of The Cambridge Ancient History in social, literary and artistic history, the proposed economic treatment by Professor Rostovtzeff would seem to insure the future student a well-rounded discussion of the period from various points of view.

This is as it should be. The field certainly is one of the most fascinating in the whole range of ancient history. Epigraphical and papyrological discoveries have opened up fresh possibilities for study. In many ways there is a peculiar similarity between the Hellenistic world and our own², and the average student feels more at home with the men and the women of this period than with those of fifth-century Greece. In addition, interest is always easy to arouse by the dynamic character of action in which the period abounds. Sordid were their political motives, decadent their art and literature³, but there is yet something vital and moving about these latter-day Greeks. Students of the history and literature of Rome seem generally to have neglected them; although it is an observation on every teacher's lips that the civilization of the Romans derived many of its most salient characteristics from the Greeks, it is not usually observed that these Greeks were the Alexandrians. To the average Roman, fifth-century Greek literature, art, and thought were *classic*, that is to say, the object of reverence or admiration rather than of enthusiasm⁴, while those of the Alexandrians, on the other hand, were present to the literary world as a living influence. The Greece which took its captor captive was the Hellenistic world, not the Greek mainland.

Mr. Tarn, in his Preface, states the limitation of his work thus (v):

This book is neither a history nor a textbook, but an attempt to get a general picture of the civilisation of the Hellenistic period, covering all the main subjects and as detailed as space permits....

He begins with two preliminary chapters, the first a Historical Outline (1-42), which 'is merely meant as a guide to the subsequent chapters...' (v), the second an introduction to Hellenistic political theory and practice (Monarchy, City, and League, 43-68). Then comes the first portion of the real work, a group of three chapters on The Greek Cities: Social-Economic Conditions (69-107), Asia (108-141), Egypt (142-165). The second portion of the volume deals, in five chapters, with the chief characteristics of the period: Hellenism and the Jews (166-192), Trade and Exploration (193-214), Literature and Learning (215-239), Science and Art (240-265), Philosophy and Religion (266-298). The volume concludes with a List of Books (299-303), following the chapters closely, and an Index (305-312).

The defects in this book are easy enough to point out. Fundamental, perhaps, is a certain flatness of

²See Mr. Tarn's fine paragraph on this phenomenon and on the corresponding danger of misinterpretation (3-4).

³The rather perfunctory treatment of literature in Chapter 8 leads one to suspect that on the whole the author is not much impressed with its significance. The treatment of art, though brief (252-265), is somewhat more enthusiastic.

⁴The attitude may be paralleled perhaps by our popular reverence for Shakespeare.

style which makes for dry reading. Perhaps one ought not to lay much stress upon the element of style, and yet I cannot help feeling that attractiveness of presentation is essential in any work that attempts (v) to "get a general picture of the civilisation of the Hellenistic period, covering all the main subjects..." This volume may be "neither a history nor a textbook", but it certainly was intended to be something else than a mere book of reference. Chapter I, a long historical outline (1-42), is in its present form hard to justify. To the specialist it will be supererogatory; to the reader unacquainted with Hellenistic history it will hardly seem either interesting or illuminating. The author says of it in apology (v) that it is "merely meant as a guide to the subsequent chapters...". But the course of Hellenistic history is notoriously involved and intricate, and this routine chapter does nothing to make it clear. A detailed chart or outline would have served equally well the practical purpose and would have been much easier to use for reference.

Another difficulty in the volume is the paucity of footnotes. This again is deliberate, and, we may infer, has been imposed upon the author by the exigencies of publication, or by what is in general a praiseworthy British tradition. In the work of an author, however, who has at his finger-tips so much information, and whose style is built on the massing of data, this defect causes no little irritation. To take merely trivial examples, not many readers who may have been attracted by the statement (82), "seemingly the first known slave club only occurs late in the period, in Egypt", will be able to supply for themselves the reference to a tiny article tucked away in a memorial volume to an Italian scholar⁵; and the reviewer would be glad to put his finger without exhaustive search upon the source of the quotation (147): "...In a recently discovered dialogue an enthusiast claims that Alexandria is the world: the whole earth is her city-land, and other cities only her villages..." In a volume like that of Professor Ferguson, with which the present work constantly invites comparison, footnotes seem less necessary, since the treatment is synthetic; Mr. Tarn's accumulation of facts, on the other hand, almost clamors for them.

The third objection to the volume is the complete absence of maps. Here again I suspect that the fault lies with the publishers rather than with the author. But the defect really is serious. Long pages of geographical description are at best tiresome even with a map, and without one they become meaningless. The encyclopedic character of Mr. Tarn's information leads him frequently into long passages of this kind. There are many dreary stretches. To take examples from only one chapter, a survey of the Seleucid Empire at its fullest extent covers pages 110-111; the best known temple states and their deities cover an unreadable page (115-116); a list of Seleucid settlements (120-122) ends with a long description of roads. All of these would, it seems to the reviewer, best have

⁵C. C. Edgar, Records of a Village Club, in Raccolta di Scritti in Onore di Giacomo Lumbroso (Milan, Aegyptus, 1925, pages 369-376).

been relegated to footnotes and appendices. The objection is not that the information is included, for it is most valuable, but that it is of the sort which should for intelligibility be presented in the form of maps or charts.

But these are faults which are slight in comparison with the solid worth of the volume. The reader is sure to be impressed with the feeling that this scholar has made himself thoroughly the master of every scrap of ancient evidence, and that he brings to this evidence a keen, inquisitive mind, entirely willing to suggest free and unconventional interpretations of the phenomena as he sees them⁶. His outlines of the political institutions of Greece, Macedon, Egypt, and Asia are masterly. If the chapters on Literature and Learning and on Science and Art leave one cold, there is a good deal of compensation in the admirable surveys contained in those on Trade and Exploration, Hellenism and the Jews, and Monarchy, City, and League.

As samples of the method and style of the author I may give a few quotations. He describes in a lucid paragraph (51-52) the administrative duties of the Hellenistic kings, and ends with this comment:

... But, speaking generally, the system of delegation was inadequate; the work that fell on a conscientious monarch—military, administrative, legal, commercial, even to the mere writing—was overwhelming; the apparent slackness in later life of certain once energetic kings doubtless means that they were worn out.

This is his definition of *koinon* (61):

... It is unfortunate that Greeks only possessed one word for almost every form of public and private association; they would have applied *koinon* equally to the League of Nations, the Swiss Republic, a Cambridge College, a Trade Union, and the village cricket club; and it is too late now, in translating it, to avoid various improper uses of the word League.

The Hellenistic ideal of cosmopolitanism is thus restated (69):

Man as a political animal, a fraction of the *polis* or self-governing city state, had ended with Aristotle; with Alexander begins man as an individual. This individual needed to consider both the regulation of his own life and also his relations with the other individual's who with him composed the 'inhabited world'; to meet the former need there arose the philosophies of conduct (Chap. X), to meet the latter certain new ideas of human brotherhood. These originated on the day—one of the critical moments of history—when, at a banquet at Opis, Alexander prayed for a union of hearts (*homonoia*) and a joint commonwealth of Macedonians and Persians; he was the first to transcend national boundaries and to envisage, however imperfectly, a brotherhood of man in which there should be neither Greek nor barbarian. The Stoic philosophy was quick to grasp the concept, and Zeno's earliest work, his *Republic*, exhibited a resplendent hope which has never quite left men since; he dreamt of a world which should no longer be separate states but one great City under one divine law, where all were citizens and members one of another, bound together, not by human laws, but by their own willing consent, or (as he phrased it) by Love....

⁶The utter damnation, for instance (220), of Menander and his followers as "about the dreariest desert in literature..." is, to say the least, striking. The reviewer does not agree, but he must admit that Mr. Tarn's judgment is more convincing than would seem at first sight likely.

In fact, the chapter with which this statement begins (that on The Greek Cities: Social-Economic Conditions) is in many ways the best in the book. Hellenistic Greece is Mr. Tarn's particular province, and his present synthesis is thoroughly satisfying.

I may call attention to some of the details which seem to me to deserve special mention. The situation of Hellenistic Egypt, presented (in Chapter V) in its proper setting, is illuminating, and may serve as an additional corrective to the early efforts of overenthusiastic papyrologists who were inclined to interpret the whole Hellenistic world on the analogy of this atypical province. The summary of the Ptolemaic land system, although presenting nothing new, is useful and clear. The whole chapter is a mordant description of the Ptolemaic exploitation of Egypt; one sentence may serve to exemplify the attitude (164-165):

... The Antigonids, with small resources, but national rulers of a free people, were the shield of the Greek world against northern barbarism and enabled the growth of the rather wonderful culture of the third century; the Seleucids, overweighted and overworked, nevertheless strove, not without success, to raise the civilisation level of half a continent. But the Ptolemies farmed their estate and filled their Treasury.

The stress laid upon the beneficial effect on the native peasantry of Seleucid policy is noteworthy. By encouraging the gradual alienation of land from the king to the city-state the dynasty opened up to the peasant an avenue of escape from complete serfdom (113-114). Also noteworthy is the clear presentation (124-125) of the well-known Seleucid policy of Hellenizing their empire by the formation of Greek cities.

One of the most interesting interpretations by the author is his relative estimate of the motives and policies of the various Hellenistic powers. At the bottom of the scale come the Romans. Viewing them as he does consistently through the eyes of their Eastern enemies, his criticism of their foreign policy comes suspiciously close to being an anti-Roman prejudice⁷. Of his condemnation of the Ptolemies I have already made mention. He is not very enthusiastic even about the Greeks, the interpretation of whom runs along conventional lines; but, coming up the scale, he displays hearty sympathy with the ideals and the policies of the Seleucids. His heart, however, is from first to last with the Macedonians, of whom we have a most enthusiastic account (55-57). On the whole, historians have yielded in the past to the temptation of accepting the Greeks' estimate of their conquerors as a backwoods, barbarian people, unscrupulous, wealthy, and prolific; it is one of the real achievements of Professor Tarn that he rescues the Macedonians from the Greeks and presents them to us as a sturdy, virile people with one fatal handicap—lack of numbers. He writes (56-57):

⁷See for instance many examples where with a sentence or the turn of a phrase the grim effect of the Roman entrance upon Eastern politics is emphasized. For examples I may cite pages 27, 29, 30, 34-36, 55, 57, 99, 102, 107, 155; but see especially the comments on pages 75, 99, and 138. "...it is not the business of history", he says (5), "to cheer for the big battalions", and one may see in his attitude something of the natural desire to protect the under dog.

... Macedonia seemed strange in Greek eyes because the country had no religious centre and the people were convinced monarchists; the Antigond house, thanks to Gonatas, so secured the people's affections that the dynasty only fell through the overwhelming power of a foreign enemy. But for all the great men Macedonia produced, perhaps the greatest thing about the little country was the plain Macedonian peasant, free, loyal, and entirely competent in peace and war alike; Macedonia fell before Rome solely because there were so few Macedonians.

This is a great book, one which will prove itself indispensable for every student of the history of the ancient world.

WASHINGTON SQUARE COLLEGE,
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY CASPER J. KRAEMER, JR.

Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church, 313-461 A.D. By B. J. Kidd. Volume II. London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge; New York: The Macmillan Company (1923). Pp. xiv + 346.

The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge is publishing a good deal of source material, both in the original tongues and in English, in convenient form for students. The present volume bears the subtitle, "Series VI: Select Passages", showing aversion to the American term, 'Source Book'. The editor has published, in three volumes, *A History of the Church to A.D. 461*. The present book is, however, no mere satellite. It gives excellently chosen and, on the whole, very interesting selections, illustrating the history of the Church from the cessation of persecution under Constantine to the death of Pope Leo the Great. The authors who predominate are naturally typical Catholics like Jerome and Augustine; but heretics such as Pelagius and reactionaries like the Emperor Julian also have adequate representation.

Most of the translations are drawn from works printed over a generation ago, such as the Library of the Fathers and the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers; in a considerable number of cases, however, Dr. Kidd has furnished translations of his own.

The interests followed out are not merely doctrinal and constitutional; they serve also to render vivid the struggles of the Church with its opponents, and the personalities of its great leaders. The book would make good collateral reading in elementary courses on Church history; and, because of its eminently readable nature, might be used in popularization.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
NEW YORK CITY WM. W. ROCKWELL

Prose e Poesie Latine di Scrittori Italiani. By Ugo Enrico Paoli. Seconda Edizione, Riveduta e Ampliata. Firenze: Felice Le Monnier (1927); Pp. xxviii + 278. Lire 14.

The present notice is intended to acquaint readers of Professor Florence Alden Gragg's Latin Writings of the Italian Humanists (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927; see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 21.48) with an Italian anthology of a similar character that appeared at about the same time. The latter collection was designed to serve the needs of classical students in the Italian Licei (Preface, vii).

The twelve Italian authors whose Latin writings have been used in part in Professor Paoli's selection are as follows: Dante (3-18), Petrarch (21-108), Pontano (111-135), Politian (139-167), Sannazaro (171-182), Bembo (185-193), Marco Girolamo Vida (197-207), Gabriele Flaminio (211-223), Girolamo Fracastoro (227-231), Diego Vitrioli (235-239), Leo XIII (243-249), and Giovanni Pascoli (253-274).

This list includes nine writers from the Renaissance (all but one of whom are represented in Professor Gragg's collection) and three (Vitrioli, Leo XIII, Pascoli) from the nineteenth century. The apparent omissions and lack of balance in this limited selection

are purposely induced, no doubt, by pedagogical considerations. There is more poetry than prose; the writers from Sannazaro to Pascoli inclusive are represented by verse only. Throughout there is a full commentary, on the same page as the text. Each selection is headed by an Italian title. Relatively disproportionate space and particular attention have been given to Petrarch, for whom there are a biographical chronological table (21-22) and a section of linguistic and grammatical observations (23-27). Otherwise there are in the book only scanty and incidental biographical data.

The sections of the Introduction (xiii-xxviii) contain remarks on biographical, textual, and orthographical matters; general discussion of humanistic meters and prosody (with special mention of the influence of Horace); particular details of humanistic prosody and meter (caesurae, hiatus, elision, consonantization of vowels, vocalization of consonants, synizesis, synaesthesia, hypermetric verses); and a list and explanation of the meters used in the poems of this collection. These pages furnish a valuable summary. The Indice (275-278) is a Table of Contents. There is no Index.

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